

5/4/64

Honkers

Talk

While hand feeding yearlings, one started saying Unh-Wuh- Unh, each sound drawn out a little, the first least so, and with a slight suggestion of a gargle noise in it. Infrequently there were slight variations. It was said almost under the breath, although with the mouth open. Gradually they walked off to drink, and I noticed a special one seemed to walk more with this one. They are still staying together as a flock, but seemed to be dividing two and three, or perhaps it is just that two are pairing and the others are still staying together.

Just before this, or the first time in over a week, Mr. BP Honker started to come up for bread as I was feeding the others. Away from sight of his nest, he was gradually being tolled toward me and was less than five feet away when his wife, who had quietly left the nest for water, issued her normal call under such circumstances. He immediately stopped eating, hurried toward her as fast as he could without running as they do in an attack or "flying". He called to her all the time "kih wonkh kih-wonkh! repeating this with the stiff-neck motion and the head elevated. He went to her and stayed with her, making the customary fuss as she returned to her eggs. He stayed with her. This is only the second time I can recall him leaving that field since she began to set.